

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 07952 241207Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 IO-13 ACDA-12 SSM-03 OMB-01 /086 W
-----010395 241209Z /15

R 241116Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6182
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSLAEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIVI
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 7952

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MARR, PBOR, SY, US, XF
SUBJ: BAATH PARTY OUTLOOK

1. SUMMARY: BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND MEMBER FAWWAZ SAYYAGH SAID SYRIA WOULD NOT ATTEND A GENEVA CONFERENCE WHICH WAS BASED ON THE CAIRO PORCESS. HE WAS CONVINCED THAT THE US PUT SADAT UP TO HIS JERUSALIM INITIATIVE. HE BELIEVED THE US OBJECTIVE WAS TO ACHIEVE A BILATERAL SETTLEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL AND THEREBY DIVIDE THE ARAB WORLD, INHIBIT ARAB UNITY AND UNDERMINE "PROGRESSIVE" REGIME'S LIKE SYRIA'S END SUMMARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 DAMASC 07952 241207Z

2. FAWWAZ SAYYAGH, BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND MEMBER RESPONSIBLY FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SPOKE TO AUSTRALIAN CHARG MCCARTHY AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR CRAIG DECEMBER 21 AND 22. CRAIG SAID HE SPENT A HALF HOUR DEFENDING US FROM SAYYAGH'S ATTACK. SAYYAGH CHARGED THAT SADAT INITIATIVES HAD BEEN COOKED UP BY AMERICANS. CRAIG DENIED THIS. SAYYAGH WAS INCREDULOUS THAT UK WOULD BELIVED US PROTESTATIONS OF INNOCENCE.

WHEN CRAIG REMAINED UNSHAKEN IN HIS POSITION SAYYAGH DISMISSED THE QUESTION SAYING THE IMPORTANT AND MOST DAMMING THIS IS THAT THE US SUPPORTS SADAT.

3. CRAIG ASKED SAYYAGH IF SYRIA COULD EVER BE RECONCILED TO SADAT AND WAS TOLD: "WE ARE ALWAYS PREPARED TO TAKE LOST SHEEP BACK INTO THE FOLD."

4. MCCARTHY ALSO WAS GIVEN LECTURE ON SINS OF AMERICA AND WAS TOLD THAT US OBJECTIVE IS SEPARATE EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI SETTLEMENT. US HOPES TO ENVELOP JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA WITHIN THEIR SCHEME AND THEREBY DIVIDE ARAB WORLD AND ISOLATE PROGRESSIVE REGIMES. THIS WAS ALL PRETTY STANDARD FARE, BUT WHAT IMPRESSED AUSTRALIAN CHARGE, WAS THAT SAYYAGH SEEMED UNSHAKABLY CONVINCED OF THE ACCURACY OF HIS ASSESSMENT OF US INTENTIONS. THE BOTTOM LINE WAS THAT THE US IS HOSTILE TO SYRIA.

5. MCCARTHY ASKED ABOUT GENEVA. SAYYAGH REPLIED: "SYRIA WILL NOT GO TO GENEVA." HE CLARIFIED THIS SAYING THAT IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT A GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD BE THE OUTGROWTH OF THE CAIRO TALKS AND WOULD BE A US MANEUVER TO JUSTIFY A BILATERAL ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN SETTLEMENT. "YOU CANNOT BUILD A STRONG EDIFICE ON A SHAKY BASE." SYRIA, ACCORDING TO SAYYAGH HAD BEEN PREPARED AND CONTINUES TO BE WILLING TO ATTEND A GENEVA CONFERENCE BASED ON RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 338
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 DAMASC 07952 241207Z

AND THE JOINT US-SOVIET STATEMENT, BUT UNTIL THE CAIRO PROCESS FAILS THERE IS NO WAY TO CONSTRUCT SUCH A GENEVA CONFERENCE.

6. SAYYAGH, WHO IS OF PALESTINIAN ORIGIN THOUGH BORN ON EAST BANK, IS A MOUTHPEACE FOR THE BAATH PARTY ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND NOT AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR TO POLICY FORMULATION. NEVERTHELESS, WE BELIEVE HE REFLECTS THE DEEPLY HELD CONVICTION OF A NUMBER OF POWERFUL BAATHI LEADERS LIKE AHMAR, BAJBUJ, SADDIQNI, AND POSSIBLE KHADDAM. HIS STATEMENTS ARE PERMEATED WITH BAATHI IDEOLIGY AND PRECONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE WAST AND PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES. THERE IS A POWERFUL MIXTURE OF XENOPHOBIA, ARAB NATIONALISM, AND A TYPE OF MARXISM IN THIS IDEOLOGY WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO AN OUTLOOK RESISTANT TO ANY OUTSIDE ADVICE, PARTICULARLY WHEN IT COMES FORM THE U.S. AMONG THESE BAATHIS EVENTS ARE INTERPRETED TO FIT THE IDEOLOGY REGARDLESS OF THE FACTS. THE PRESIDENT AND SOME OF HIS IMPORTANT FOREIGN POLICY ADVISORS LIKE NAJI JAMIL ARE LESS INHIBITED BY BAATHI IDEOLOGY. NEVERTHELESS, THEY ARE NOT IMMUNE TO ITS APPEAL.
MURPHY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 24-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DAMASC07952
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770481-0282
Format: TEL
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771219/aaaaapbk.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e86f0efd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 132373
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BAATH PARTY OUTLOOK
TAGS: MARR, PBOR, SY, US, XF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e86f0efd-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009